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ABSTRACT

Anchoring, a term rooted in the seafaring world, is a useful metaphor for contemplating the role of music in schooling, and particularly for thinking about the implications of including music in the professional development school (PDS) reform movement. In 1999, the College of Education at William Paterson University (Wayne, New Jersey) joined two other New Jersey universities to form the New Jersey State Teacher Quality Enhancement Consortium. It was created to implement a five year federal quality teacher enhancement grant awarded to a number of university coalitions to support efforts to develop PDS partnerships between colleges of education and high-needs, culturally diverse urban schools in regions served by the consortiums. William Paterson's College of Education (COE) initially chose five schools from three city school districts in New Jersey as preliminary sites. The grant required that arts and science faculty at the university and public school level should be involved in the partnership, so PDS site coordinators were installed and other faculty were recruited. This paper discusses the development of the program in various locations, using boating metaphors in explanatory questions. The paper outlines four goals that guide the New Jersey Consortium. It provides a ship's log for the first and second years of the program. The paper notes that the data gathered in a formal needs assessment and through informal data collection throughout the partnership suggest four anchors with great potential for connecting the combined educational visions of music educators and PDS planners: (1) building level collegiality; (2) discipline-specific collegiality; (3) interdisciplinary training; and (4) connection to preservice education. It further suggests that planners of PDS networks for music teachers make a connection with the music education association in their state. (Contains 18 references.) (BT)

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Sound Ways of Learning: Anchoring Music Education to the PDS P-16 Reform Movement

Staying the Course: PDS, an Anchor for P-16 Reform
March 28, 2003
Towson University
Strand: Building and Nurturing the PDS through networks that foster collaboration

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At some point in your boating career you will probably want to anchor (International Marine Educators, 2002a).

Anchoring has several meanings, but is rooted in the seafaring world. It is a useful metaphor for contemplating the role of music in schooling, and particularly for thinking about the implications of including music in the professional development school (or PDS) reform movement. If you think about it, *anchoring* is not of much use until a ship pulls away from the dock; and pulling away from the dock is foolhardy without first planning a voyage, recruiting a crew, plotting a route, and choosing appropriate anchors.

Interestingly, the literature on boating safety stresses that no single anchor will work in every circumstance. Differences in the size of the vessel, the depth and current of the body of water, the surface at the bottom, and the weather determine the type of anchor and the method of anchoring. Thus, even for a single voyage, it may be necessary to have several anchors aboard.

These maritime metaphors aptly describe the emerging PDS relationship between our state university and the music educators from three high-needs school districts in northern New Jersey. In 1999, the College of Education at William Paterson University joined two other New Jersey universities to form the *New Jersey State Teacher Quality Enhancement Consortium*. The

coalition was created to implement a 5-year Federal Teacher Quality Enhancement grant that was awarded to a number of university coalitions across the country to support efforts to develop PDS partnerships between Colleges of Education and high-needs, culturally diverse urban schools in the region served by each consortium.

Our College of Education (COE) initially chose 5 schools from three city school districts in New Jersey as preliminary PDS sites. A COE faculty member was recruited to serve as a liaison between each PDS site and to plan and coordinate partnership activities at the site. The grant required that arts and science faculty at both the university and public school level should be involved in the partnership, so once the PDS site coordinators were in place, the recruiting of other faculty began. As a result I was invited (as a music education faculty member) to join this voyage in the second half of year two of the grant.

While the grant and the stated mission of the partnership were clear about the importance of including the arts in the PDS model, details of what that might mean were sketchy. This is consistent with much of the school reform literature; the importance of the arts in education is often stressed but seldom given form or substance. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but necessitates the involvement of arts (in our case music) faculty from both the university and the partnership schools if a meaningful collaboration is to be realized.

Sending an untrained crew on an untried ship into uncharted waters can be a recipe for aimlessness, if not disaster. On the other hand, a working fleet has to allow enough leeway for each member ship to find anchorages that are both profitable for its crew and beneficial to the fleet. This is a dilemma faced by school reformers. With limited time and budgets, slacking the

lines so that arts educators can seek similar (but not identical) anchorages is a risk many are afraid to take.

We were fortunate that our grant administrator, the university's faculty liaisons, and the building administrators were willing to let us (the music faculty and the partnership music teachers) decide whether we would be part of the master PDS plan (a single ship) or create a plan specifically for music teachers in the schools (a ship in a fleet with a common mission). Early in the PDS conversation, the Holmes Group suggested that improving teaching depends upon giving teachers the opportunity "to contribute to the development of knowledge in their profession, to form collegial relationships beyond their immediate working environment, and to grow intellectually as they mature professionally" (1986, p. 56). Realizing that the isolation of music teachers-who teach largely one to a building-created limited opportunities for this kind of collegial growth, we chose to crew and pilot our own ship. We created a collaborative group of music teachers that we called the Coalition Music Teachers (CMT's). This group was formed to provide curricular support for music education in all of the partnership schools. Our initial explorations have led us to suggest that it is possible to adjust the traditional PDS model (based primarily on classroom teaching) so that the co-collegial needs of music teachers and other specialist teachers and the arts-related interdisciplinary needs of classroom teachers can be met. The remainder of this presentation will describe our "maiden voyage," and share the plans and excursions we envision for the future.

Mapping the Voyage

In order to find our way safely from place to place on the water we must depend on road signs just as we do on land. The aids to navigation are the road signs of the water (International Marine Educators, 2002b).

School/arts partnerships are often characterized by "a sort of 'drive-through' approach to education," where content learned in any given place is separate from the next. Little effort is made to connect these related experiences into a meaningful whole (Robinson, 1998, ¶8). In other words, reliable maps to guide co-collegial partnerships between music educators, PDS colleagues, and university music faculty are rare–indeed, the voyage and its potential anchorages are largely uncharted. Still, there are suggestions as to how the PDS model might meet the needs of teachers who teach specialized content and serve in limited number at a given school site. Zimpher (2001), for instance, suggested that while most PDS partnerships involve single school sites, "the professional development school notion might accommodate networks of types of classrooms; for instance, a number of sites for music educators, reading resource teachers, or the special education classroom across a district" (p. 44). She cautions; however, that the networking concept could undermine the idea of a building staff working together.

A literature review found three partnerships–at the Ohio State University, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of North Texas– that involved music or art teachers. Parsons (2000) and several colleagues at the Ohio State University created a partnership with the art teachers from four school districts in their region. The purpose of this partnership was to address the need for discipline-specific training and collegiality for art teachers. Parsons and his colleagues decided on specific criteria for participants (successful teachers in schools where

student teachers were frequently placed and who shared the methodological philosophy of the OSU art department) and for their institutions (administrators who supported art education including specialized inservice activities) prior to establishing the partnership. They established three purposes for the collaboration: preservice education, inservice learning, and research. Parsons offers a telling description of the co-collegial nature of art teaching as he describes "the tension between viewing the teacher as an independent subject-matter specialist and as a school faculty member" (p. 224). This is an important characteristic of all arts teachers, and we found a similar tension pulling at the music teachers in our partnership. Writing in year four of the OSU partnership, Parsons notes that the contexts of institutional priorities and individual personnel leave much to chance in a partnership relationship, especially with a fledgling partnership and even with those that are established.

The music education PDS relationships described by Susan Conkling of the Eastman School of Music and Warren Henry of the University of North Texas (1999) are similar to the traditional PDS model: Professors partner with an excellent pedagogue in their region to co-teach methods classes. While efforts like this one have done much to vitalize preservice music teacher education in their respective institutions, the collegial relationships addressed by their partnerships are limited to the teacher(s) they work with directly.

One reason for the dearth of musical involvement in the PDS movement may be that most music schools see their role in clinical training for music teacher certification as limited to the pre-service or novice teacher. The idea that the university and public school share responsibility for pre-service training, in-service teacher quality, and student achievement, is foreign to many institutions responsible for music teacher education. (Conkling & Henry, ¶6). In addition, music

departments or schools are often housed separately from colleges of education. This is the case in our university and is also the case at the Eastman School, the University of North Texas, the Ohio State University, and here at Towson University. Thus, collaboration at the university level is a rarity, simply because of the geographic limitations of the institution. This limitation carries through to most public school sites, where music rooms (if they exist) are far-removed from other classrooms, and music teachers do not share preparation time with other teachers (indeed, they usually provide it).

Realizing that existing navigational systems had little experience plotting a journey like ours, we set out with only a few pre-set map points. The New Jersey State Teacher Quality Enhancement Consortium (of which our partnership is a member) is guided by the following goals:

- *Goal 1: Create regional and statewide K-12/IHE/ Public Partner committees to integrate curriculum reform, teacher preparation, and educational policy reform activities*
- *Goal 2: Recruit and prepare a diverse group of new teachers; and reform preservice teacher education.*
- *Goal 3: Create Professional Development and Assessment regional and statewide K-12/IHE/ Public Partner committees to integrate curriculum reform, teacher preparation, and educational policy reform activities.*
- *Goal 4: Address issues critical to New Jersey's "high-need" schools, especially student achievement.*

In addition, the following ideas served as our personal navigational points:

- *Belief in importance of music as a discipline for students of all ages and cultures.*
- *Desire to become involved in urban music education as researcher and colleague.*
- *Belief in interdisciplinary education that is true to all disciplines, both in a discrete and a multi-disciplinary sense.*

These anchorages were the only ones we deemed unacceptable:

- *The idea that music education is purely for "relaxation" or "enjoyment" without a disciplinary or skills base in the curriculum.*
- *The idea that the purpose of music education is to enrich other academic subjects without recognition of the academic nature of musical skill and knowledge.*

Preparing for Storms

At certain times of the year weather can change rapidly and you should continually keep a "weather eye" out, especially to the west, in order to foresee changes which might be impending. Storms on the water can kick up suddenly and without warning (International Marine Educators, 2002c).

In the PDS relationship, a storm can mean a change in the priorities of an institution or administrator, a change in the structure of government or institutional funding, or a change in personnel. To prepare for such an instance, the Coalition Music Teachers partnership has been structured so that the CMT's are poised to become an independent curricular support group for urban music educators at the end of the grant period. It is likely that the New Jersey Music

Education Association (NJMEA) will eventually sponsor the curricular support aspects of the CMT vision. In addition, NJMEA will be using our Needs Assessment model to plan three inservice days for urban music teachers in other regions of the state during the 2003-2004 school year. With preparation such as this, the music teachers in the partnership are less likely to be swamped by a sudden storm that threatens the future of the collaboration without warning.

Pulling Away from the Dock

Prior to getting underway, you should implement an undocking plan with the help of your passengers. You should consider the traffic in the area, the direction of wind and current and the depth of the water (International Marine Educators, 2002d).

The partnership literature speaks of the fits and false starts that characterize the beginnings of any partnership relationship and this one was no different. The first year of the Coalition Music Teacher partnership was characterized by site visits and unstructured interviews with the music teacher and administrator in each Partnership school. The typical PDS model involves a single university faculty member working as a partner with one or more public school faculty members, co-teaching classes and sharing responsibility for student teachers. This model worked well for the two most successful sites in year one of the partnership. Thus, I initially envisioned working as a co-teacher with individual music teachers in several schools, and then bringing those teachers together on occasion to talk about their work. It turned out that while the music teachers were happy to talk to me a few times (one principal said they thought I was "harmless"), they were not about to share their classrooms with me on a regular basis.

In retrospect, I refer to this stage of our relationship as the "who are you and what do you want?" stage. It is a not comfortable stage to be in, since after committing to a partnership vision and being provided with resources, there is an expectation that a project will suddenly take off. It seems; however, to be a necessary stage that is frequently mentioned in the literature. Examples are the concept of "a time before the beginning" in the NCATE PDS standards (2001, p. 3), and Robinson's (2000) review of literature related to arts-in-education partnerships.

The Ship's Log: Year One

3/27/01: As I ponder my own role in the Partnership, I find that I don't have much information about exactly what is happening and what is needed at each site in terms of music.

4/5/01: I don't believe it would benefit anyone for me to just show up with some "grand idea" to impose upon the school. (Frank said "they'd kick you right out of here"-meaning the teachers at G6.) I don't know anything about urban education (other than what I know about education in general). I don't know much about education in New Jersey. The best way to proceed is to establish a relationship for a prescribed amount of time and see what happens.

5/31/01: I wonder what I would have thought in my classroom if a professor . . . had shown up to help me solve the music problems in my schools . . . . What would it have taken for me to actually let one of those folks have access to me and my classroom? This teacher is being incredibly gracious to let me walk in and take up his time practically sight-unseen.

6/7/01: I'm starting to have a better sense of what is needed. Both of these teachers have confirmed my thoughts that the arts get left out of school reform. It may be by design or de

9/14/01: What do we have to offer a partnership? The most obvious (and quickest) is simpl collegiality. We can set up meetings between the music teachers in the three schools to hel them figure out what they need, and perhaps can fund some of those things through the partnership.

Coalition Music Teachers, Year Two

By the time we reached year two of the CMT partnership, it was obvious that develo music teacher collegiality and talking about the role of music in the partnership schools wo a big part of our work together. Guided by research stating that activities rather than goals propelled collaboration through its initial stages (Lieberman, 1986 in Robinson, 2000) we i the music teachers in the Partnership schools to the university campus for a series of meetin which essentially served as small-scale needs assessments. Thus began the process of build the CMT's into a coherent group.

The first meeting consisted of getting acquainted and brainstorming about music tea need. In our second meeting, we narrowed our focus to four primary goals:

1. Developing a program to bring chamber music into the partnership schools by provi excellent training for pre-service music education students. This project would ben both the PDS students and the WPU students.

2. Creating a mission statement related to the importance of music in urban schools, and disseminating it to policy makers and institutions of higher learning.
3. Investigating ways to bring greater professionalism to urban music teachers.
4. Planning a symposium on urban music education at sometime in the future.

In our third meeting we decided that a main focus of our energy would be the creation of a mission statement as the impetus of becoming a public voice in support of urban music education. The CMT's suggested they would like to gain further input from their peers in their respective school districts before writing the mission statement; they felt that a needs assessment similar to that of their first meeting (brainstorming, followed by discussion, followed by decision making) would be of greater benefit to them and their colleagues than simply following their own opinions. This idea propelled us into year three of our journey.

The Ship's Log, Year Two.

2/9/02: There is a strong sense among the CMT's that they need a collective voice that has the power to speak about the needs of urban music teachers in a more public forum. It must be noted that most of these needs are related to the overwhelming nature of their task-teaching music in a meaningful way when they only see students once a week; meeting the musical needs of students who are literally from "around the world;" carrying their teaching materials around "on a cart;" having no office or classroom; having no place in the classrooms they visit to work, write on the board, or post materials.

I asked them if they would like to meet again. The response was: "YES!-If it goes somewhere." To this end, they suggested a series of meetings during the remainder of the school year. In the final meeting they would like to create a mission statement.

Perhaps the reason music is left out of school reform is because it is invisible to the administrators who actually plan the "hands-on" acts of reform. Few knowledgeable reformers (Gardner, etc) leave music out of the picture, but when it gets down to the district and school level music gets left out. The grant administrator made a good point yesterday-one of the reasons no one ever sees the music teacher is because there are always kids in their rooms-they are always working. But that means that the administrators and other power-brokers don't really know what the music teachers are doing.

Coalition Music Teachers, Year Three

We are currently in year three of the Coalition Music Teacher partnership. This year's focus on drafting a mission statement has changed the direction of the CMT's (at least for the time being) from activities revolving around the PDS sites, to analyzing and responding to the needs of the greater urban music education community in the North Jersey region. We began this process by planning a full day needs assessment and inservice day in September of 2002 for all music teachers in the districts served by the partnership. Our needs assessment (N/A) followed the three-phase model suggested by Altschuld and Witkin (2000). Briefly, during the *pre-assessment* stage a committee is formed to decide whether there are needs to be met. The Coalition Music Teachers served as this committee. The *assessment* stage involves formal assessment of a constituent group for the purpose of understanding and prioritizing perceived

need. Our inservice day provided quantitative data for the needs assessment; qualitative data including observations and unstructured interviews are still being conducted and analyzed. The *post-assessment* stage involves identifying and selecting solution strategies; we plan to begin this stage in the coming month and expect to be in this stage for at least another year.

Prior to the formal needs assessment, the Coalition Music Teachers were trained to be facilitators for the inservice workshop. We designed the day to enable music teachers to network, to discuss common problems and their solutions, and to prioritize their needs. The needs assessment was based on the question:

"What is needed to take urban music education from where it is now to where it could be?"

At the start of the workshop, music teachers were divided into focus-type groups of approximately 9 people. First the participants had an opportunity to dialogue so they could get to know each other and share a few useful teaching techniques. Next, they were asked to brainstorm answers to the "question of the day" by creating a "mind-map" of their ideas. After individuals created their mind-maps, they shared them with a partner and then with members of their groups. Each group then created priority list based on the similarities in each individual's mind maps. Finally, each group presented a list of their 8-10 priorities to the whole group of teachers in attendance. Priorities indicated the following needs:

Music Teacher Priorities

- Facilities 8
- Supplies/Instruments 7
- Administrative/Collegial (non-music) support 5
- Funding 4
- Scheduling 4
- Discipline 3
- In-District Networking/Staff Development 2

In an effort to strengthen the data, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire related to their professional needs. The questionnaire was based on one developed by Fiese and Decarbo (1995). Results of the questionnaire confirmed that the music teachers in the partnership districts we serve consistently placed the following needs at the top of their priorities:

1. Facilities & Supplies
2. Administrative support/Collegial (non-music) support
3. Validation of music "as a legitimate subject"

Results from the combination of music teacher prioritizing and the questionnaire will help us navigate as we plan our future voyages together.

Choosing Anchors

The first step in anchoring is to select the proper anchor. In spite of claims to the contrary there is no single anchor design that is best in all conditions (International Marine Educators, 2002a).

Scholars and researchers endorse the idea of anchoring music to school reform efforts. There is widespread belief that music is itself a worthwhile discipline for study (Eisner 2001; Gardner, 1999), and conjecture that music aids other types of academic achievement in schools (MENC, 2002). The question to be answered, then, is what are the best tools for anchoring music education to the PDS P-12 reform movement.

The data gathered in our formal needs assessment and through informal data collection throughout the partnership suggests four anchors that have great potential for connecting the combined educational visions of music educators and PDS planners: *Building Level Collegiality, Discipline-Specific Collegiality, Interdisciplinary Training,* and *Connection to Preservice Education*. The music teachers in our study overwhelmingly state a need for administrative and collegial support. In addition, each of our interviews with administrators contained at least some mention of the power of music to connect to other disciplines and the need for the music teachers in their schools to develop skills in that area.

We suggest on this basis that creating interdisciplinary teams of classroom teachers, music teachers, and other special area teachers that meet on a regular basis to work on shared interdisciplinary content should be built into the PDS model. Such a team would foster the *building level collegiality* so badly needed by music teachers, and would also enable classroom teachers and others to access the specialized knowledge music teachers hold. Secondly, we suggest the creation of a network of music teachers, preferably with a university or district-based

coordinator, to provide the *discipline-specific collegiality* and curricular support so badly needed by specialist teachers. Since both music teachers and school administrators have noted a need for *interdisciplinary training*, we suggest that this be a topic for both of these venues. Finally, we suggest that a *connection to preservice education* that fosters co-collegial connections between pre-service music educators and classroom educators be established. In this way, perhaps preservice educators can overcome the disciplinary and collegial boundaries that currently impede the utilization of the many resources music teachers have to offer in schools.

Given the tenuous nature of partnership relationships, we further suggest that planners of PDS networks for music teachers make a connection with the music education association in their state. Many state MEA's are currently investigating ways to support urban music educators and would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with a university/school partnership. Further, making a connection with the state organization provides the music educators in the partnership with a means of curricular reinforcement that is not dependent upon either the university or school administration for support.

An Invitation to a Journey

The William Paterson Coalition Music Teacher partnership has been fortunate in that its explorations thus far have been generously supported by a grant from the New Jersey State Teacher Enhancement Consortium. The coming school year is the final one in which the partnership will be funded in this way. Our travels thus far have given us a strong foundation and the experience to navigate in deeper waters. We look forward to the next stage of our voyage in which we plan to visit the anchorages discussed above: *Building Level Collegiality,*

Discipline-Specific Collegiality, Interdisciplinary Training, and *Connection to Preservice Education.*

Music and the other arts are a crucial part of the educational fleet with which we educate our children. We invite you to join us on our journey, to continue in the quest for anchoring music education to the P-16 Professional Development School model.

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